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No. 11.

MESSAGE

OF

THE PRESIDENT

AND

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
City of Austin, Dec 30th, 1841.

To the Honorable the Senate
and House of Representatives

I avail myself of an early opportunity to lay before the Congress, for its consideration and action, the accompanying information transmitted to me from the Department of War. It has some bearing upon our relations with Mexico, and may be of considerable importance.

If these statements be correct, there can be no doubt that they are designed as preparatory to some movement against Texas.—Mexico, in my opinion, (relying upon the current intelligence of the day,) has at no time, since the year 1836, been in a situation so favorable for annoying us, as at the present moment.

If we should be invaded by Mexico, (and I regard a *demonstration* as most probable,) I would recommend that Congress empower the Executive to procure (if in our present depressed condition it be possible,) as many Paixhan cannon as would be absolutely necessary for the protection of, at least, Galveston and

Matagorda Bays A battery at the entrance of each of those bays is conceived to be indispensable to prevent the entrance of the enemy, should they obtain the naval armament, which, it would seem, is not without reasonable probability I regard the fortification of those two points as important to the safety of the country, in the event of any movement of the enemy They will not invade us, unless they are assured they possess decided naval superiority In that event we should be prepared for every annoyance which they may be capable of inflicting upon us This recommendation is made with due regard to our financial condition The possession of Galveston would be an object of primary importance with the enemy and a comparatively trifling expense would be sufficient to render any attempt of the kind futile less

On the subject of the naval agency, I would make one remark —and that is, that I have always regarded and still regard the duties of Executive and disbursing officers directly opposite in their character, and whenever amalgamated they are calculated to produce confusion They cease to operate as checks upon each other, and present every inducement to the individual so employed to practise fraud and peculation upon the Government, to an amount much greater than would pay salaries to proper officers necessarily employed, who would operate as checks upon each other. The practice and experience of all Governments go to clearly demonstrate these facts and it is no matter whether they are monarchical or republican

In relation to the proposition to fit out the Zavala by Yucatan, I would most especially recommend that we have nothing farther to do with that State, as I regard it in no other light than as the theatre of insurrectionary movements, stimulated by motives of personal policy, and terminating in a short-lived and bloodless revolution, the ulterior designs of which, when developed, we may have ample reason to regret. I regard all foreign alliances as wholly unnecessary to the prosperity of the Texian nation.

The other suggestions of the communication from the Department of War are presented in a manner sufficiently explicit to supercede the necessity of any farther remark from the Executive.

SAM. HOUSTON.

DEPARTMENT OF WAR AND NAVY,
December 22, 1841

To his Excellency SAM HOUSTON,
President of the Republic of Texas

By the mail of last evening despatches were received from Commodore E. W. Moore commanding Texas Navy, dated the [illegible] consisting of the Sloop-of-War Austin [illegible] San Bernard and San Antonio ready for [illegible]

He also communicates to the Department the letters of Colonel Peraza and of the Hon. Secretary of War and Navy of Yucatan, that of the former advising him of a further advance of five thousand six hundred dollars by the Government of Yucatan, and that of the latter stating that a further sum, making the whole amount [illegible] eight thousand dollars, will be placed in the hands of Mr. Brevoore, their Consul at New-Orleans subject to the order of Commodore Moore, as speedily as possible. We are further informed by letters from the U. States that the Mexican Government have now building at New-York two brig-schooners, of about 170 tons burthen, and to carry seven guns each; and in England two iron steamers. These vessels will, no doubt, carry one or more bomb cannon or Paixhan guns, and the request of Com. Moore follows for the same ordnance, two for the ship, two for the Zavala, two for the Wharton (brig) and one for each schooner. Indeed, from the improvement in this ordnance, it would seem necessary that they be provided, that our vessels may be able effectually to compete with that of the enemy. The Government of Yucatan has offered to furnish the means for fitting out the Zavala, and the dry dock at New-Orleans can be procured for the purpose of overhauling her.

The seamen shipped in March last, for the purpose of manning the Schooner San Bernard,—when the Hon. Judge Webb was sent to Mexico,—have not, as yet, been paid their wages, or any part of it. The officers are equally in want, having received no pay since that time.

In the reduction of the navy, under an act passed 18th Jan. 1841, office of the naval agent and naval store-keeper was abolished, and the duties imposed upon the Commander of the Navy. I wish to call the attention of your Excellency to the utter *impossibility* of that officer performing the duty. He is now at sea and called

upon to do the duties pertaining to one on shore or in the navy-yard. Omnipresence is imperative by the act of Congress, but not within the power of the officer. Many objections would arise even if the Commander of the navy was required to remain in port. The responsibility of so many duties as would devolve upon him would be too great, and temptation to do wrong would be constantly before him. As a matter of necessity, I would respectfully recommend the appointment of naval agent and naval store-keeper.

These duties have been, in fact, performed by Mr. James W. Moore, under the direction of the Commodore; and from the observation I was enabled to make during the last summer, I believe him to be fully competent.

Commodore Moore reports Midshipman Duke Faulkner, recently promoted from the San Bernard by the late administration, as a "boy who can neither read nor write;" consequently totally unqualified to fill that station. I await your Excellency's order for his dismissal from service.

I have the honor to be,
Very respectfully,
Your most obedient servant,
GEO. W. HOCKLEY,
Secretary of War and Navy.